

**ORIGINAL**

**001182**

RECEIVED

USPS-T-7

JUL 15 2 53 PM '98

POSTAL RATE COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**BEFORE THE  
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001**

MAILING ONLINE SERVICE

Docket No. MC98-1

**DIRECT TESTIMONY  
OF  
LINDA WILCOX  
ON BEHALF OF  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

2 AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH ..... ii

3 I. PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY ..... 1

4 II. MY INVOLVEMENT ..... 1

5 III. MY VIEWS ..... 2

**Direct Testimony**  
**of**  
**Linda Wilcox**

**AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

My name is Linda Wilcox. I own the Blues Ship Cafe in Tampa, Florida. The club has been in operation since 1991. We offer the best in live entertainment and, as the name of the club indicates, we specialize in blues music – Delta Blues, Southern Blues and a little rock. We have performers from Chicago, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Mississippi, and have featured such artists as Bo Diddley, Bobby “Blue” Bland, Bobby Rush and Lucky & James Peterson.

I am a licensed optician and prior to opening the Blues Ship Cafe, I owned an optical business in Tampa, which I have since sold to my sister. I am a member of the Tampa Chamber of Commerce and have served as a board member.

1 I was attracted to the Mailing Online service because of the direct mailing of my  
2 calendars. I send them to customers throughout the Tampa area and to nearby cities,  
3 including St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Newport Richey and Baker. I even send  
4 calendars to customers in Chicago and other cities around the country who visit Tampa  
5 as tourists or on business. I get their addresses from information sheets they fill out at  
6 the club and from business cards they leave me so I can include them on my mailing  
7 list. I have found that direct mail is very effective because people are likely to open mail  
8 that has their name on it.

### 9 III. MY VIEWS

10 Being able to automate this whole project was appealing to me and it has proved  
11 to be a real time saver. I can now get the entire mailing completed in about half an  
12 hour. And because of the ease of the process, the mailings get completed.

13 The Mailing Online program has other benefits. For one, it caused me to purge  
14 my mailing list of bad addresses. After my first mailing using this service, about 300  
15 calendars were returned either because people had moved or because I had a wrong  
16 address, or a faulty ZIP Code. I purged that list and the second and third mailings have  
17 been better. I have since found that I can have my lists cleaned as part of the Mailing  
18 Online program and I will use that service.

19 With the convenience of Mailing Online, I can also send out more mailings per  
20 month. We sometimes get last minute bookings and with Mailing Online, I have the  
21 option of sending out another notice to let people know about these changes in the  
22 schedule.

1 I was attracted to the Mailing Online service because of the direct mailing of my  
2 calendars. I send them to customers throughout the Tampa area and to nearby cities,  
3 including St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Newport Richey and Baker. I even send  
4 calendars to customers in Chicago and other cities around the country who visit Tampa  
5 as tourists or on business. I get their addresses from information sheets they fill out at  
6 the club and from business cards they leave me so I can include them on my mailing  
7 list. I have found that direct mail is very effective because people are likely to open mail  
8 that has their name on it.

### 9 III. MY VIEWS

10 Being able to automate this whole project was appealing to me and it has proved  
11 to be a real time saver. I can now get the entire mailing completed in about half an  
12 hour. And because of the ease of the process, the mailings get completed.

13 The Mailing Online program has other benefits. For one, it caused me to purge  
14 my mailing list of bad addresses. After my first mailing using this service, about 300  
15 calendars were returned either because people had moved or because I had a wrong  
16 address, or a faulty ZIP Code. I purged that list and the second and third mailings have  
17 been better. I have since found that I can have my lists cleaned as part of the Mailing  
18 Online program and I will use that service.

19 With the convenience of Mailing Online, I can also send out more mailings per  
20 month. We sometimes get last minute bookings and with Mailing Online, I have the  
21 option of sending out another notice to let people know about these changes in the  
22 schedule.

1 Mailing Online has also gotten me interested in other capabilities of the  
2 computer. I am using e-mail more for various things. And we are setting up a web site  
3 for the Blues Ship Café to give us better exposure. The computer is the future and it is  
4 a tool that all of us in business are going to be using more and more.

5 It felt good when I found out that this pilot program was being offered to small  
6 business owners like me. After all, government is supposed to help the people. We  
7 trust the Postal Service to get our mail delivered, and small businesses are the ones  
8 who really need this kind of product. It will help us to grow and save money. I have  
9 talked with other small business owners and they are all curious and enthusiastic about  
10 Mailing Online. I hope this test is a success because I do not want to go back to the old  
11 way of preparing and mailing my calendars.

12 As with any new business tool, there are kinks that must be worked out. But I  
13 want you to know that I have been very satisfied with Mailing Online. It has made my  
14 life easier and improved the way I operate my business. Using Mailing Online has also  
15 introduced me to other products available from the Postal Service and it has even  
16 shown me how I can make better use of the computer.

17 As I said, the computer is the way of the future. The better equipped we are to  
18 make full use of this tool the better off we will be as business owners. And the better off  
19 we are as business owners, the faster our economy will grow and that helps everyone.